

1       1. (Amended) Apparatus for use in draining, cleaning and  
2 refilling an aquarium tank having a gravel-covered tank floor  
3 comprising:

4           a) an elongated flexible hose having first and  
5 second opposite ends;

6           b) a tube including an upper distal end for connec-  
7 tion to said first end of said flexible hose, and a lower  
8 distal end adapted to be immersed in the aquarium tank  
9 such that said lower end may be placed near the [bottom]  
10 gravel on the floor of the aquarium tank;

11          c) a first means attachable to said second end of  
12 said flexible hose and for connection to a flowing water  
13 source for creating a continuous flow of water from the  
14 tank through said tube and said flexible hose; [and,]  
15          d) a grille, defined by a chamber and including a  
16 plurality of apertures formed in the walls thereof that  
17 are narrower than the width of the gravel particles  
18 covering the floor of the aquarium, said grille and  
19 chamber attached to said lower distal end of said tube for  
20 contact with the gravel for moving the gravel about the  
21 floor of the tank such that the gravel particles are  
22 forced by said movement to bump and rub against each other  
23 outside said tube to dislodge the sediment and impurities  
24 that have gathered therewith, and wherein said sediment  
25 and impurities are swept by said water flow through said  
26 apertures into said chamber, up said tube and through said  
27 hose for discard without the entrance of gravel into said  
28 tube or hose; and,

e) wherein said grille includes a plurality of tooth-shaped lattices covering said distal end of said tube, for extending into the gravel, at least one of said lattices being of a height greater than the depth of the floor-covering gravel so as to always present a portion of said apertured grille to the aquarium water above the gravel to allow a continuous flow of water into said tube to sweep the debris that passes into said tube through said apertures, out of the aquarium.

34. (Amended) Apparatus for use in draining, cleaning and refilling an aquarium tank having a gravel-covered tank floor comprising:

a) an elongated flexible hose having first and second opposite ends;

b) a hollow tube including an upper distal open end for connection to said first end of said flexible hose, and a lower distal open end adapted to be immersed in the aquarium tank such that said lower end may be placed near the [bottom] gravel on the floor of the aquarium tank;

c) a water pump, including a pump inlet for connection to said flexible hose second end, for drawing a continuous flow of water through said hose out of the tank; and,

d) a grille, defined by a chamber and including a plurality of apertures formed in the walls thereof that are narrower than the width of the gravel particles, said grille and chamber attached to said lower distal end of

1       said tube for contact with the gravel for moving the  
2       gravel about the floor of the tank such that the gravel  
3       particles covering the floor of the aquarium are forced  
4       by said movement to bump and rub against each other  
5       outside said tube to dislodge the sediment and impurities  
6       that have gathered therewith, and wherein said sediment  
7       and impurities are swept by said water flow through said  
8       apertures into said chamber up said tube and through said  
9       hose for discard at said pump outlet without the entrance  
10      of gravel into said tube or hose;

11      e) wherein said grille includes a plurality of  
12      three-dimensional tooth-shaped lattices, covering all of  
13      said lower open distal end of said tube, said lattices  
14      arranged parallel to each other, each said lattice being  
15      of a height greater than the depth of the floor-covering  
16      gravel so as to always present a portion of said apertured  
17      grille to the aquarium water above the gravel to allow a  
18      continuous flow of water into said tube to sweep the  
19      debris, passing into said tube through said apertures, out  
20      of the aquarium.

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22      41. (Amended) The apparatus of Claim 34 wherein said grille  
23      comprises:

24      a) a planar base frame defined by sides that form a  
25      perimeter thereabout;

26      b) an opening formed in said frame about which, on  
27      one side thereof, is located a means for attaching said  
28      grille to said tube lower distal end;